

Issue 63

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Contents

Letter from the President..... 1

News from the IASSA
Secretariat 3

Upcoming Events..... 4

Announcements &
Opportunities 7

Emerging Scholars & Research
..... 8

Features 12

New Publications 21

End Notes: IASSA Council
2024-2027 24



International Arctic Social Sciences association

Northern Notes

The Arctic in Turbulent Times



Source: Maria Ackrén (private photo), The American Consulate in Nuuk 2024

Letter from the President

Maria Ackrén

Dear members from the end of December 2024 until now “all eyes” have been on Greenland. We have experienced an overwhelmingly high attention from all world media. It has been exhausting for a small population and for our small University with the small staff and a handful of researchers, who have been answered all questions about the geopolitical interest from the new Trump administration, the question of independence, social affairs, historical relations towards Denmark, the election to *Inatsisartut* (Greenlandic Parliament), and all other things that might be of interest. We have never experienced this sort of media circus before. We are living in uncertain times when it comes to world politics and some academics, politicians and officials have recently come with statements that we are moving into a new world order, where the USA might move away from the NATO alliance and align itself as a more authoritarian state. We can only hope that this is not the case, but what we see right now is concerning on many levels. One positive thing that has come out of this is that we now see that the European states stand together. It also seems that military expenses throughout Europe are enhancing. This has spillover effects also to the Arctic. We see that many Arctic countries are enhancing their defense budgets to secure the Arctic as well. How will Arctic cooperation be sustained in the future? Is the Arctic going to still be a region of peace? What will happen to the Arctic Council? The Kingdom of Denmark will take over the chairship in May 2025 and Greenland will receive a more prominent role as having the Arctic Ambassador role within the Danish delegation. It is still uncertain who will become the Arctic Ambassador, but time will tell.

The recent election in Greenland resulted in a totally new governing party, *Demokraatit*, who won all over Greenland with about 30 percent of the votes. This political party is a social liberal party more to the right of the left-right spectrum and therefore we also see a new political era

in Greenlandic politics. *Demokraatit* is in favor of independence as most of the political parties, but in the long run. They anticipate a development where competencies will be taken over step-by-step, based on a sustainable economy. In their election campaign issues such as a better elementary school, better health care, privatization and a smaller public sector with lower taxes were in the forefront. Now, we will see if some of their promises will be realized. The population in Greenland is clearly looking for a shift in politics for the four upcoming years. During the time of writing a new coalition is underway. It is stated that it will be a broad coalition, but it is uncertain which parties will be in that coalition. The next election will be the election to the municipalities. It will be interesting to see if we also will be seeing the same kind of shift at the local level as we have experienced on the national level. The election will take place on the 1st of April 2025.



Source: Maria Ackrén (private photo), Demonstration against USA in Nuuk Saturday 15th of March 2025 where political leaders stand united on this issue as well as most of the population.

News from the IASSA Secretariat

New Secretariat Member, Spring 2025



Norja Walther

I am excited to join IASSA as the new Secretary. I hold a BA in European Cultures and Society from Europa-Universität Flensburg, Germany. During my studies, I moved to Greenland, initially as a guest student, and decided to stay to continue my education. I am now a full-time student in the Master of Arctic Social Sciences at Ilisimatusarfik – University of Greenland.

My academic interests lie in the human, societal, and cultural dimensions of the Arctic, with a focus on critical perspectives, including issues of gender, race, and colonialism. These interests also reflect in my BA thesis *Transcending the North-South Dichotomy: Global Perspectives on Green Colonialism*. Looking ahead, I plan to pursue a PhD to further explore my interests.

I look forward to contributing to IASSA and engaging with the Arctic Social Sciences community.

Connect with IASSA on Social Media



IASSA on X [@IASSA_SocSci](https://twitter.com/IASSA_SocSci)

And now also on Bluesky [@iassa.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/iassa.bsky.social)



Follow us for news and announcements related to the field of Arctic Social Science

Use the following hashtag:

#IASSA for news within and about the association

Upcoming Events

Conference/Congress	Dates	Webpage
Arctic Encounter Symposium	April 2-5, 2025	https://www.arcticencounter.com/#index
Arctic Circle India Forum	May 3-4, 2025	https://www.arcticcircle.org/forums/arctic-circle-india-forum
Rovaniemi Arctic Spirit Conference	May 5-7, 2025	https://www.rovaniemiarcticspirit.fi/EN
EU Arctic Forum, Indigenous Peoples' Dialogue and Arctic Youth Dialogue	June 26-27, 2025	https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/events/eu-arctic-forum-indigenous-peoples-dialogue-and-arctic-youth-dialogue-2025-06-26_en
The 2 nd Inter-Polar Conference	September 3-5, 2025	https://www.arcticcentre.org/EN/Inter-Polar-Conference
Arctic Circle Assembly	October 16-18, 2025	https://www.arcticcircle.org/assemblies
The 18th Polar Law Symposium	October 22-24, 2025	https://uk.uni.gl/events/indigenous-rights-autonomy-empowerment-environment/
Greenland Science Week	November 10-16, 2025	https://www.scienceweek.gl/
Second Nordic Association for European Studies Conference	November 27-28, 2025	TBA, Roskilde University & Nordic Association for European Studies
Arctic Circle Rome Forum – Polar Dialogue	December 2025/January 2026	https://www.arcticcircle.org/forums
UArctic Congress and Assembly	May 25-31, 2026	https://www.uarctic.org/about-us/calendar/uarctic-congress-and-assembly-2026/
ICASS XII Congress	TBA 2027	TBA, Ilisimatusarfik/University of Greenland

Share Your Conference & Workshop Experiences!

Have you recently attended a conference or workshop relevant to Arctic social sciences? We'd love to hear about it! Share your insights and experiences with the IASSA community by reaching out to our secretary at ncwa@uni.gl.

The 18th Polar Law Symposium

Indigenous Rights, Autonomy, Empowerment & Environment

October 22-24



Save the Dates:

Mid-January 2025: Call for Papers

April 30, 2025: Abstract submission deadline

June 30, 2025: Acceptance of papers

May 2025 – October 20, 2025: Registration open

October 22-24, 2025: 18th Polar Law Symposium, Nuuk Greenland

November 30, 2025: Submission to Yearbook of Polar Law

More information can be found here:

<https://uk.uni.gl/events/indigenous-rights-autonomy-empowerment-environment/>

About the Polar Law Symposium

The 18th Polar Law Symposium will be held in Nuuk, Greenland, on 22nd – 24th October 2025. It is jointly organized by Ilisimatusarfik (the University of Greenland) and the University of Akureyri, Iceland. The Arctic Centre at the University of Lapland, Finland, the University of Akureyri, Iceland, and the University of Arctic and its Arctic Law Thematic Network are supporting organizations of the Polar Law Symposia.

This is the second time that the Polar Law Symposium is held in Greenland, following the successful 4th Polar Law Symposium in 2011. Participants will see many changes in Nuuk since their last visit, including a new international airport with direct flights to Europe and the US, many new hotels, a shopping center, and a rapidly growing university.

The Polar Law Symposium has been held annually since 2008. Interested contributors are encouraged to review the details and program of the 17th Polar Law Symposium, held in Östersund, Sápmi, in September 2024. Participants at all the symposia are encouraged to submit their work for blind peer review and publication in the Yearbook of Polar Law.

WORKSHOP: Contested frontiers: Exploring the “re-constitution” of settler-state peripheries

Department of Comparative Politics, University of Bergen, Bergen, Norway

May 13-14, 2025

Between Indigenous self-determination and settler colonization lie contested frontiers – places like the Yukon Territory in Canada, Finnmark in Norway, Lapland in Finland, the Northern Territory in Australia, New Caledonia in the French Pacific, and Guam in the U.S. Pacific. Such frontiers are torn between “us” and “them,” “theirs” and “ours.” As such, they are subject to constitutional contestation – to fights over the framing of the polity.

In the past, settlers used force to swallow frontiers into the body politic (for examples, in the U.S. they carved “Indian Country” into federal territories, which they cleansed, dominated, and made into states of the union). Recent decades have seen an Indigenous resurgence, rekindling contestation, particularly on the few frontiers that remain. With the advent of the rights revolution, contestation is increasingly pursued through appeals to “constitutive principles”: Is the frontier domestic or foreign? Is its demos universal or divisible? Should individual or collective rights prevail? Should democracy or self-determination decide?

For the launch of the research project Contested Frontiers, or ConFront (funded by a five-year European Research Council Starting Grant), we invite scholars to a **workshop in Bergen, Norway, on May 13-14, 2025**, to explore contests over constitutive principles in, and how such contests shape and are shaped by, Global North settler-state peripheries.

This workshop is multidisciplinary, welcoming scholars of politics, constitutional law, and normative political theory. It is international: We invite those with interests especially in US, Canadian, and Australian territories, the Arctic, Nordic peripheries, and French overseas jurisdictions. And, this workshop will strive to grapple with salient

dilemmas, including the “boundary question,” rights to territory, settler (de)colonization, democratic inclusion, the (il)liberality of borders, consociationalism, and more.

If you are interested in joining us and sharing your work, please email Aaron Spitzer (aaron.spitzer@uib.no) with the title and 300-word abstract, as well as an indication as to whether this is a full paper or a work-in-progress, by **1st of April**. Space is very limited, so please make contact as soon as possible.

Announcements & Opportunities

NOMINATIONS: 2025 Frederik Paulsen Arctic Academic Action Award

UARctic and the Arctic Circle welcome **nominations for the 2025 Frederik Paulsen Arctic Academic Action Award**. The Award aims to further the development of new ideas that could contribute materially to preventing, mitigating, adapting, and reversing the effects of climate change in the Arctic. 100,000 euros of unrestricted funds are provided to the awardee to help facilitate the development of ideas and increase impact through outreach, engagement and communication.

The call for nominations is open **until April 30, 2025**. More information, including the full call, is available at www.uarctic.org/actionaward.

Nominees should propose **creative ideas that are action- and results-oriented** and at an early stage of development. These ideas should nevertheless be grounded in academic research and scholarship, while also, where appropriate, giving due regard to the knowledge practices of Arctic residents, including Indigenous peoples. Nominations should describe **an action that addresses the causes or impacts of climate change on the Arctic region**. Ideas can be broad in scope, or geared toward local issues but could have results scalable to the entire Arctic region, and potentially beyond. We are looking for bright new ideas from people/groups with a demonstrable drive to achieve change.

Read more and nominate by April 30, 2025:
www.uarctic.org/actionaward

The winner will be announced at the Arctic Circle Assembly in October in Reykjavík, Iceland.

Emerging Scholars & Research

Aviaq Fleischer: Archive treasures – cultural heritage from and about Greenland. The Arctic: media, reception, archives, dissemination (2024)



Aviaq Fleischer's article-based PhD thesis from Institute of Culture, Language and History, Ilisimatusarfik – University of Greenland shows different aspects of media development from 1970s Greenlandic society investigated through different analyses. The PhD thesis focuses on the creation of Greenlandic simultaneous television, the content of the media analyzed discursively, and the state and content of

media archives in KNR-TV and the former local TV station Tusaat tv-Aasiaat, respectively. The four articles of the dissertation all show an aspect of media history in Greenland. The first article is an analysis of the portrayal of the Norwegian Danish missionary Hans Egede in the Greenlandic media over the course of 50 years from 1971 to 2021. Within this time span a shift in the perception of authorities in the Greenlandic society can be seen. In the second article, the cooperation between DR and KNR-TV in the creation of simultaneous television in

1982 is analyzed from a power perspective. This article sheds light on an unequal power relationship between the starting KNR-TV and the influential Danmarks Radio. In the third article, the viewer's perspective on KNR-TV's archives becomes the focal point of a reception analysis, of how the viewers perceive old broadcasts and rebroadcasts. In the last and fourth article, the focus is on Tusaat TV-Aasiaat's media archives, which are now stored in the local museum in Aasiaat. The content and condition of the media archives are described, and in this context the Archives Act and the Cultural Heritage Act in Greenland are discussed. The fourth article has open access¹.

The dissertation sheds light on how Greenlandic is affected by media both from within and from outside of the society, and on how the media influence has taken place from the beginning of simultaneous television in 1982. From a media imperialist point of view the media influence has taken place at roughly the same level as all other countries outside of America.

The dissertation discusses what the future of television may look like in Greenland, and how the Archives Act and the Cultural Heritage Act can be revised if the modern Greenlandic history via TV media is to be preserved.

The empirical material in the thesis has been methodically collected through sources like Greenlandic media (radio, newspapers, TV, online news and social media), research articles, fictional and factual literature, legal texts and executive orders, reports, collaboration agreements, qualitative interviews with artists and KNR employees and, not least, from quantitative studies of viewers via a questionnaire survey.

¹ <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/oa-edit/10.4324/9781003325406-16/private-audiovisual-media-archives-greenland-aviaq-fleischer?context=ubx&refId=e4f15852-b74e-449a-94a2-86ad85cda40a>

Tiril Vold Hansen: Greenwashing geopolitics? Power and interests in Norway's Svalbard policies

Tiril Vold Hansen, now Senior Researcher at Nordland Research Institute, successfully defended her PhD in Sociology at Nord University, Norway, December 17, 2024. This is an introduction to her PhD research project about power and interests in Norway's Svalbard policies.



Svalbard, located in the far north of Norway, is facing a series of intertwined changes related to climate, economy, demographics, and geopolitics. These shifts pose significant challenges for the Norwegian government in balancing competing priorities for the Arctic archipelago. The Svalbard Treaty grants Norway full sovereignty over the area, but a key aspect of maintaining this sovereignty has been a sustained Norwegian presence, historically

supported by the coal industry. However, partly in response to environmental concerns, the Norwegian government began transitioning away from coal mining to tourism, research, and education in the 1990s, with the last coal mine scheduled to close in 2025. This has contributed to changes in Svalbard's demographic makeup, with a growing international proportion of the archipelago's population. The transition thus raises a critical question: how can Norway maintain its presence and hence sovereignty in Svalbard without the coal industry?

Through a qualitative exploration of the three political processes of phasing out coal, stricter environmental regulations and firmer research policies, this study revealed that Norway is attempting to address its sovereignty concerns by strengthening environmental policies. I argue that stricter environmental regulations could potentially increase the number of Norwegian residents, thereby bolstering

Norway's claim to sovereignty. As the international tourism industry is disrupted by these regulations, the number of foreign workers in Longyearbyen might decrease, while new job opportunities in the Governor's office—such as legal advisors and field inspectors—could encourage more Norwegians to stay. Moreover, by framing policies around environmental concerns rather than geopolitical considerations, the government can reinforce its control over the region while sidestepping contentious discussions about Svalbard's maritime zones and who has the right to explore and exploit its resources. This opaque approach to policymaking, however, has sparked local opposition and contributes to reinforce tensions between local residents and the government.

In conclusion, this study suggests that Norway's use of environmental policies in Svalbard is a covert strategy to assert its geopolitical interests. While these policies do aim to reduce emissions, protect wilderness, and promote research, they also serve a geopolitical purpose: maintaining Norwegian control over the archipelago. Norway's Svalbard policies thus include a selective disclosure, in which the sovereignty aspect is often covert. Bluntly stated, one may say that Norway thereby is "greenwashing" geopolitics in Svalbard.

Further reading:

- Chuffart, R., Hansen, T. V., & Medby, I. A. (2024). Rethinking the exercise of sovereignty in the Anthropocene: From extraction to environmental protection in Arctic Svalbard. *Political geography*, 114, 103–185.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2024.103185>
- Hansen, T. V. (2022). The role of the literature and theory in defining and bounding a case. *International journal of qualitative methods*, 21.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069221142998>
- Hansen, T. V. (2024). Geopolitics, diplomacy, or idealistic research? Framing the research community in Ny-Ålesund. *Polar journal*, 14(1), 212–228.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/2154896X.2024.2342110>
- Hansen, T. V. (2024). Phasing out coal on Svalbard: From a conflict of interest to a contest over symbolic capital. *Polar Record*, 60.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0032247424000020>
- Hansen, T. V. (2025). Power and interests in environmental policy processes: The Svalbard case. *Environmental sociology*, 11(1), 1–11.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/23251042.2024.2385544>
- Hansen, T. V., & Moe, A. (2024). Norway's research policy for Svalbard: Intentions and perceptions. *Polar geography*, 47(3), 202–218.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/1088937X.2024.2372264>

Nanni, U., DeRepentigny, P., Lundén, A., Popovaité, V., Shen, Y., Basaran, I. K., Duarte Neubern, N., Mascorda-Cabre, L., Bennett, A., Vold Hansen, T., Holmes, F. A., Kawatha, E., Meyer, A., Prakash, A., & Wołoszyn, A. (2024). Redefining Arctic boundaries in a changing climate: Interdisciplinary perspectives on governance strategies. *Polar geography*, 47(2), 127–155.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/1088937X.2024.2359926>

Features

INTERVIEW: Mark Stoller on Why Arctic Researchers Need to Embrace Their Mistakes



Source: The photo was taken by Mosie Jayko. On the left is Tuppittia Qitsualik – the photo is of Tuppittia and Mark Stoller translating the Elder interviews.

Dr. Mark Stoller remembers the moment he became an Arctic scholar. He was an MA student, studying in the library at McMaster University in Canada, reading about international environmental law. “One of the big, early test cases was when the SS Manhattan went through the Northwest Passage in 1969, and Canada’s response was the Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act,” he says. “And I was just struck by the thought that I’d never really learned anything about northern Canada. And that was the transition point.”

Now an assistant professor in the Department of Geography and Planning at Queen’s University in Canada, Stoller’s research and teaching focus on historical and political geographies of northern Canada. In doing this work, he says, he draws inspiration from diverse

fields, including northern studies, settler colonial studies, environmental and historical geography, and political geography.

But especially, Stoller says, he draws inspiration from the relationships he has made, and maintains, in the Arctic. For the past decade, Stoller has spent on average a month or more each year in communities in Canada's North. There, he says, "I love to talk to people," working with Indigenous friends, collaborators and informants.

At first a lot of Stoller's time was spent in Denendeh, the Dene region of the Northwest Territories, where he examined the history of the Dene political mobilization of the 1970s and 1980s.

That research sent him deep into the Northwest Territories Archives in Yellowknife, where he first laid eyes on the mid-1970s Dene Mapping Research Project. "That just turned things on its head for me," he says. "It opened my eyes to the breadth of the Dene resistance movement. I was drawn to the scope of that resistance, the clarity with which Dene articulated the colonial nature of Canada. And I was drawn to the novelty of it, because this was an incredibly exciting time within Native Country in Canada."

But that research also sent him out – out of the archives, and out of settler-dominated Yellowknife, into Dene communities, where he interviewed people who, as young adults, had been on the front lines of the resistance. Those people, he says, were graceful yet straightforward in correcting his misperceptions and mistakes. His work with them resulted in his PhD, earned through the University of British Columbia in 2019, with the dissertation *What the Border Divides: Settler Geographies and the Making of the Northwest Territories*.

More recently, Stoller has focused even farther north, on Uqsuqtuuq, or Gjoa Haven, in Nunavut's Kitikmeot region. There, he works with Inuit youth to record and share local histories and stories. He and the youth gather knowledge from elders, to document, for example, what life was

like in the 1950s to 1970s when Inuit were transitioning from a life on the land into permanent communities.

But while the data they gather is about the past, the lessons learned apply acutely to the present. "I think there's a perception that, because life was so different 70 or 80 years ago, that elders and youth cannot relate to one another," he says. "A lot of the [youths'] questions are around overcoming hardship. And it turns out the skills that are needed to overcome hard times are not contextually specific. A lot of the stories we hear from elders are of hard times, and I think a lot of young people today experience life as hard, for different reasons. But the skills required are the same: endurance, the knowledge that you're not alone, that you still have responsibilities and obligations and opportunities to – as one elder said – keep one another warm."

What advice would Stoller give to junior scholars interested in entering Arctic social-science research? He says it seems young researchers today feel a lot of pressure to not make mistakes, especially when working at the interface of settler/Indigenous content. "But that's an impossible standard," Stoller says. "If you're not Indigenous and you are trying to engage in meaningful work, you are going to make mistakes, or you are going to reveal biases. It is OK to make those mistakes, with the understanding that you work to make things right when they've occurred."

In that spirit, he says, there is no substitute for being there, and embracing mistakes head-on. "Go to the north. Do whatever you can – find a way to get there. Read, so that you do things in a responsible way, but go. Go and be there."

Contribute to Northern Notes!

Do you have a publication or an interesting read to share? We welcome recommendations for new publications in Arctic social sciences to feature in **Northern Notes**. Help us keep our members informed and engaged by suggesting noteworthy research or your latest reading interests.

Send your suggestions to our secretary at ncwa@uni.gi

Human Dimension of Climate Change at the Stefansson Arctic Institute

Author: Helga Númadóttir, researcher at the Stefansson Arctic Institute, M.A. in Polar Law from the University of Akureyri and former intern at Nasiffik - Centre for Foreign & Security Policy at Ilisimatusarfik, University of Greenland.



From left: Jón Haukur Ingimundarson, Joan Nymand Larsen, Þórný Barðadóttir, Helga Númadóttir (Höfðagerðissandur beach, Northeast Iceland)

The following note introduces current research on the human dimension of climate change conducted at the Stefansson Arctic Institute within two EU-funded climate research projects launched last year: The ILLUQ project led by the Alfred Wegener Institute for Polar and Marine Research (Prof. Hugues Lantuit), and the ICEBERG project led by the University of Oulu (Dr. Thora Hermann and Dr. Élise Lépy).

The Stefansson Arctic Institute (SAI) is a research institute dedicated to Arctic research based at University of Akureyri in Northeast Iceland. SAI takes an interdisciplinary approach to understanding human-environment relations in the Circumpolar North, placing particular emphasis on research concerning economic systems and human development, marine-resource governance, political ecology of agricultural systems, and the impacts of and adaptation to past and present climate change.

Last year, research on the human dimension of climate change was expanded at the Institute with the launch of the two new projects. ILLUQ and ICEBERG are sister projects funded under the same Horizon Europe call, which enhances collaborative efforts between the two

projects as well as the third sister project ArcSolution. ILLUQ and ICEBERG have objectives to study climate change and pollution impacts and adaptation measures in Arctic coastal communities in South and West Greenland, Northeast Iceland, Svalbard, and Arctic Canada. Both projects involve close collaboration across disciplines and sciences among many international partner institutions, and the use of citizen science to work in co-production with local residents and stakeholders.

At the Stefansson Arctic Institute the research is led by Prof. Joan Nymand Larsen, senior scientist and research director at SAI, and professor of economics in the faculty of social sciences at the University of Akureyri. Working with Joan are Jón Haukur Ingimundarson, a senior scientist and associate professor at the University of Akureyri, Þórný Barðadóttir, PhD candidate and researcher, and researchers Helga Númadóttir and Andrea Marta Knudsen.

[ILLUQ](#) is a permafrost research project rooted in participatory research with local stake- and rightsholders, focusing on the long-term implications of decision-making in the context of permafrost thaw. A key aspect of ILLUQ is its emphasis on collaboration with local and Indigenous knowledge holders. The project builds upon the [NUNATARYUK permafrost project](#) (EU H2020) which ran from 2017 to 2023 and leverages prior knowledge and networks of local contacts already established by several of the researchers involved. ILLUQ provides a holistic approach to permafrost thaw, pollution, One Health and well-being in the Arctic and investigates the risks from contaminant release, infrastructure failure and ecosystem changes to stakeholders. The project focuses on three (sub) regional case studies: Ilulissat in West Greenland, Svalbard and the Mackenzie River Delta in Canada.

In October 2024 Joan and Helga traveled to the town of Ilulissat in Disko Bay to join fellow researchers for the first week of fieldwork. During their stay in Ilulissat, the ILLUQ researchers collected initial samples and engaged in consultations with the local community to identify concerns, needs, and priorities related to permafrost thaw. This included hosting a public consultation meeting at City Hall and consulting with various community stakeholders from different sectors, private companies, and

public institutions, including local schools, and different departments within the municipality of Avannaata. This initial week of fieldwork established a strong foundation for ongoing collaboration and knowledge sharing between researchers and local stakeholders as the project unfolds.

The [ICEBERG](#) project aims to do a comprehensive assessment of the sources, types, distributions, and impacts of pollution in combination with chronic climate-induced stressors on ecosystems and communities in the European Arctic's land-ocean continuum using a One Health approach. ICEBERG furthermore aims to develop strategies for enhancing community-led resilience and pollution-control governance, working in co-production with local stake – and rightsholders. The project focuses on three (sub)regional case studies: western Svalbard, South Greenland, and Northeast Iceland.

In August 2024, the ICEBERG project successfully kicked off its first field season in Northeast Iceland (Akureyri and Húsavík) where SAI researchers along with Huld Hafliðadóttir, local coordinator and member of the ICEBERG Advisory Board, welcomed their colleagues from the ICEBERG cohort. Following a productive week of fieldwork in Iceland, the team traveled to South Greenland (Narsaq, Qaqortoq, and Nanortalik) where they were greeted by local coordinator Erik Kielsen, who, along with Huld, serves on the project's advisory board. During these initial weeks of fieldwork, ICEBERG researchers engaged with various local stakeholders to build partnerships and connect with local communities through community consultations and other activities, including hosting community consultation meetings to introduce the project and learn about local concerns and environmental observations. The researchers also launched citizen science training with drones used in the project to map marine litter.

In both ILLUQ and ICEBERG, successful research has been conducted so far and valuable data has been gathered across all case study regions. Researchers at SAI are now analyzing data, preparing for dissemination activities and gearing up for upcoming field seasons in the summer and fall of 2025.

Stay tuned for updates!

[ILLUQ](#)

[ICEBERG](#)

[Stefansson Arctic
Institute](#)

REFLECTIONS ON: Emerging Leaders – Arctic Frontiers and Arctic Youth Conference

Mikajosefin Jonsson Gehrke, Political Science student at Luleå Technical University. Board member of Sáminuorra and part of the WWF Sweden Youth until December 2024.



In January 2025, I had the opportunity to participate in the *Emerging Leaders 2025*. We started our journey in Bådåddjo (Bodø) and then our trip took us to Ánddasuolu (Andøya), Sommarøya and ended in Romsa (Tromsø). We had many inspiring and interesting seminars led by both *Emerging Leaders* participants and local people working in the areas we visited. These sessions covered a wide range of topics, allowing us to expand our knowledge while also sharing our own expertise.

I found the *Emerging Leaders* program valuable for young professionals interested in diplomacy and policymaking to engage with like-minded peers, exchange thoughts, ideas and experiences, and collaborate with policymakers and other stakeholders.

As an Indigenous person, this is an amazing opportunity to make our voices heard. To make our knowledge and experiences heard on an equal footing. Advocacy for biodiversity and climate change can often feel overwhelming when done alone. However, this program reinforced the importance of collaboration, demonstrating that the key issue is not a divide between local and Indigenous communities but rather a shared effort to challenge unjust policies.

We participated in the Arctic Youth Conference (AYC) on Sunday, 26th of January. I had previously attended a youth-oriented conference and

found the experience meaningful. As an Arctic and Indigenous young woman, I find it inspiring to meet, talk, share, and learn from others who share similar concerns and experiences. I wish we had been able to attend the Arctic Youth Conference for the entire weekend in Romsa (Tromsø), rather than just on Sunday, as this would have provided more opportunities and exchanges. Additionally, I felt that much of the focus was on the Nordic Arctic, while AYC brought together participants from across the entire Arctic. A broader perspective, incorporating insights from all Arctic regions, would have enriched the discussions. What made AYC particularly special was that it felt more like coming home or meeting family members, which I have rarely experienced at other conferences.

The Arctic Frontier Conference, in contrast, was a hectic week where we attended many seminars to listen and learn, with some of us even participating as moderators or speakers. The scale of the conference made it a vastly different experience from AYC. Its size and structure reminded me of the overwhelming environment of a bustling shopping mall. A more integrated approach between AYC and Arctic Frontiers could have been beneficial, not to take space from the youth, but in an effort to make policymakers become active listeners AND participants to understand youth issues and help implement our solutions.

When we were in Sommarøya in the days following the AYC, the *Emerging Leaders* participants divided into two groups: "*The Arctic State of Affairs*" and "*The Cost of Going Green*". I was in the group "*The Arctic State of Affairs*", where we encountered several challenges in our discussions. Our group developed a strong draft for a speech and video that covered climate change and the environment, economics, sustainable infrastructure and international cooperation, as well as, space, marine biology, locals and Indigenous issues. However, balancing multiple perspectives and fitting them in the given time frame was challenging. In the end, the aspects of space, marine biology, and some Indigenous aspects, which I had hoped to highlight, were left out, making me feel unable to advocate for them. Conflicting perspectives on the relationship between local and Indigenous issues have played a

central role in our discussions. I have a soft spot for minority topics, which might be why I want to advocate for them. In the end, the video was good enough, even if I wish we could bring up more of the issues that are not on the surface.

The *Emerging Leader* Program was educational and rewarding. I wish for the future that even more younger people are invited to the *Emerging Leader* Program. I strongly recommend this program for next coming years!



IASSA Membership Renewal - Stay connected with the Arctic social sciences community!

IASSA is a membership fee-based association. Your IASSA membership supports the **International Congress of Arctic Social Sciences (ICASS)**, the **Northern Notes** newsletter, and IASSA's representation at the **Arctic Council** as well as other arenas where we want to be heard.

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New Publications

1st Edition The Routledge Handbook of Arctic Governance Edited By [Elena Conde Perez](#), [Corine Wood-Donnelly](#) Copyright 2025

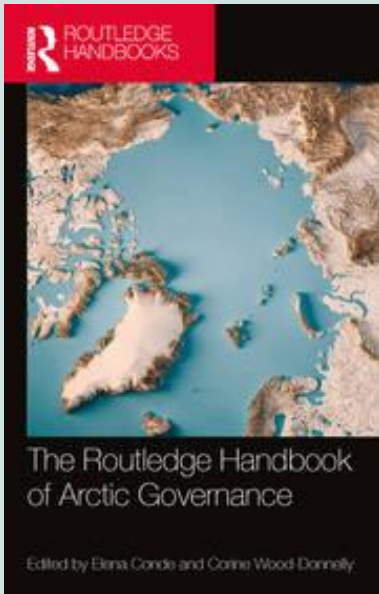
The Routledge Handbook of Arctic Governance edited by Elena Conde and Corine Wood-Donnelly, is a comprehensive exploration of the multifaceted issues surrounding governance in the Arctic region. Delving into the complex intersections of justice, sustainability, and security in Arctic politics, it is divided into six sections

- Perspectives and Governance Dynamics
- Indigenous Agency
- Security and (Geo)Political Strategies
- Ethics and Justice
- Ocean Legal and Environmental Challenges
- Sustainable Development and Economic Challenges
- a Final Chapter and an Epilogue, this multidisciplinary volume unites scholars across the social sciences to offer a comprehensive exploration of Arctic governance

Building on the Horizon 2020 JUSTNORTH project, the volume highlights the importance of influencing regulatory frameworks to ensure sustainable economic development and just societies in the Arctic. It shows how security concerns permeate all levels of governance—from national military strategies to community-level human security, where adaptation to climate change is crucial.

This handbook serves as a vital resource for understanding how justice, security, and sustainability shape Arctic governance. It will be of interest to scholars and students of global governance, security studies, environmental studies, and geopolitics, offering insights into the region's pressing social, environmental, and geopolitical issues.

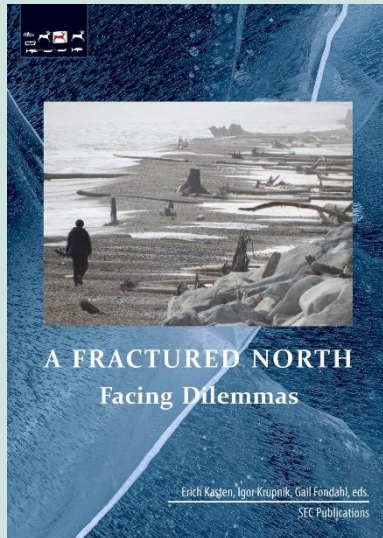
([Routledge, 2025](#))



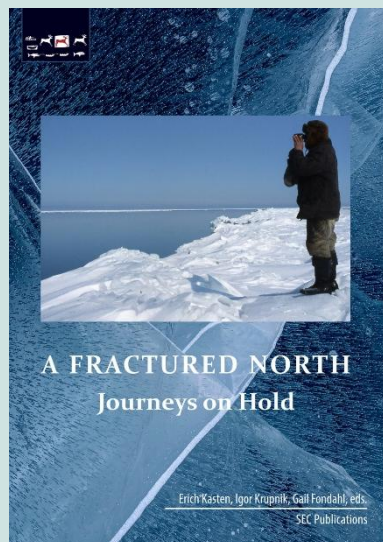
Link to book:

[Routledge](#)

The three volumes are available online:



<https://dh-north.org/publikationen/a-fractured-north-facing-dilemmas>



<https://dh-north.org/publikationen/a-fractured-north-journeys-on-hold>

A Fractured North

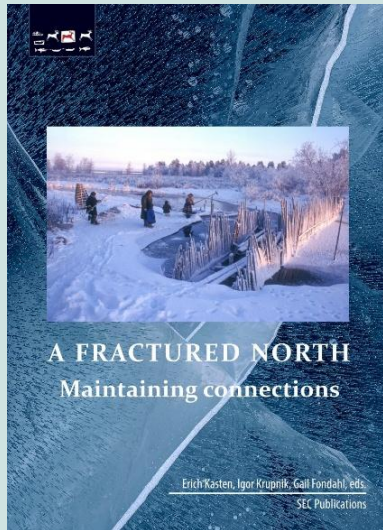
A FRACTURED NORTH: Facing Dilemmas (Vol. 1; 2024), **A FRACTURED NORTH: Journeys on Hold** (Vol. 2, 2024), **A FRACTURED NORTH: Maintaining Connections** (Vol. 3, 2025). Erich Kasten, Igor Krupnik, and Gail Fondahl (eds.). Furstenberg/Havel: Kulturstiftung Sibirien.

By Gail Fondahl, Igor Krupnik and Erich Kasten

A Fractured North, a 'troika' of volumes, collects and disseminates the responses of the 'western' Arctic social science community to the war in Ukraine. The closure of Russia's Arctic to these scholars, after some thirty years of access and building collaborative relationships with colleagues and community partners, dumbfounded us. If many of us had experienced the creep of authoritarianism over the past decade, we had not anticipated such a quick 'freeze' of long and productive relations.

To explore what this freeze meant to our community, and how we might deal with the newly 'fractured North' the three co-editors, Erich Kasten (Foundation for Siberian Cultures, Germany), Igor Krupnik (Smithsonian Institution's Arctic Studies Centre, USA) and Gail Fondahl (University of Northern British Columbia, Canada) approached scores of social scientists in worked in the Russian North to contribute. While after considerable discussion we initially did not invite colleagues still residing in Russia, we put out a call for contributions via the IASSA listserv, which reaches many colleagues in Russia. Some IASSA members will remember our launching the first volume at ICASS XI last May in Bodø – we thank IASSA for that opportunity!

The three volumes include 43 papers, mostly from anthropologists, but also from archaeologists, geographers, historians, and sociologists. Our 51 contributors include senior scholars, some with decades of fieldwork in the Arctic, mid-career scholars, and early career researchers (post-doctoral fellows, PhD candidates and even one undergraduate), whose hopes for a career of research in the Russian North have been



<https://dh-north.org/publikationen/a-fractured-north-maintaining-connections>

as well as for purchase (contact Erich Kasten: kasten@kulturstiftung-sibirien.de).

shattered. Several contributors (21) were born and raised in Russia and have left their home country, including a few who left after February 2022. Of these, eight are Indigenous persons.

Each volume focuses on a theme. Volume 1, “Facing Dilemmas”, includes articles that detail current experiences of the fracturing of the once-connected Circumpolar North, as well as historical essays that discuss how, in previous situations of repression in Russia, scholars dealt with various dilemmas posed by the authorities. Volume 2, “Journeys on Hold,” offers reflections on projects suspended by the Russian invasion of Ukraine and reports of how scholars who formerly worked in the Russian North are adapting their research, as well as musings on ‘what went wrong’, including from the ‘Western’ side. Volume 3, “Maintaining Connections” addresses the importance of the relationships in Russia that many of us have built over time, and how these might be maintained -- or repaired. It also considers the opportunities and risks of new online and other methods, that allow for research from afar, while the Russian North remains mostly inaccessible.

Across the three volumes, contributions include both more scholarly works and more personal narratives of the losses that the current fracture inflicts. Our contributors also espouse a spectrum of views on to what extent we should try to (re)engage with colleagues and partners in the Russian North, in the face of both the war and the current constraints imposed by Western research institutions in response to it.

We encourage readers of Northern Notes to explore what we consider to be a rich collection of both informed and diverse reflections by our many colleagues and fellow IASSA members on this current challenge to Circumpolar Northern studies.



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